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BOOK NUMBER 1.967

754342 A2086

March 1950

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATION
BUREAU OF ENTOMOLOGY AND PLANT QUARANTINE
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

CRICKETS IN THE HOME

Crickets are not normally household pests. They sometimes enter homes, however, and cause damage by chewing holes in fabrics.

Two species are most commonly troublesome--field crickets and house crickets. Field crickets develop outdoors and feed on all sorts of vegetation. They enter dwellings late in the summer when vegetation becomes scarce or after crops are harvested. House crickets are most troublesome near city dumps or other areas being filled in with refuse. Large numbers of crickets may develop there and swarm to houses at dusk during July to September. In warm climates the house cricket may occur in homes the year round.

Control

In the House--Closing all openings and tightening screens, windows, and doors is an aid in preventing crickets from entering the home. If they enter in spite of these precautions, apply an insecticide around baseboards, in closets, and in cracks or other places where crickets may hide. Treat in the basement, too, if crickets occur there. Effective insecticides to use are DDT as a 5-percent spray or 10-percent powder, or chlordane as a 2-percent spray or 5-percent powder. In using these insecticides be sure to observe the precautions listed on the label of the container.

Outdoors--When crickets are numerous outside the house, they can be controlled with a poison bait scattered around the foundation, in the yard, or over dump areas. The application should be made late in the day. Dumps may have to be treated heavily several times a week during the season when crickets are abundant. A good bait formula contains 25 pounds of bran, 1 pound of sodium fluoride or sodium fluosilicate, 2 quarts of molasses, and 2 1/2 gallons of water. Care should be taken to prevent children, pets, or domestic animals from eating this bait.

Covering dumps to a depth of 6 inches with clean earth or ashes will destroy or prevent cricket infestations.



